



**Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission  
Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee  
Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family**

1700 West Washington Street, Suite 230, PHOENIX, ARIZONA 85007

A general meeting of the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission (AJJC) Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee was convened June 13, 2019, at the Governor's Office of Youth, Faith and Family, 1700 West Washington Street, Suite 230, Phoenix, Arizona 85007, notice having been duly given.

Members Present (4)	
Helen Gándara, Chair	Alice Bustillo
Jennifer Ortiz	Earl Newton
Staff/Guests Present (1)	Members Absent (0)
Steve Selover, GOYFF	

**Call to Order**

- **Ms. Helen Gándara**, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. with four members and one staff present.

**Welcome/Introductions**

- **Ms. Gándara**, Chair, welcomed and thanked members for attending.

**Approval of Minutes**

- **Ms. Gándara**, Chair, requested a motion to approve the April 4, 2019, meeting minutes.
  - **Ms. Alice Bustillo** motioned to approve the minutes as drafted.
  - **Ms. Jennifer Ortiz** requested a correction to change DMC to Racial and Ethnic Disparities when referring to this committee in the minutes.
  - **Ms. Bustillo** motioned to approve the minutes, contingent upon the change requested by Ms. Ortiz.
  - **Ms. Ortiz** seconded the motion.
- The motion carried with no dissenting votes.

**2018 DMC Conference**

- **Mr. Earl Newton** provided highlights and major take-aways from his attendance of the National DMC Conference in November 2018.
- **Mr. Newton** expressed that he was very impressed to see examples of the work being done nationwide to address disparities in the juvenile justice system.
- **Mr. Newton** added he heard conference attendees express their frustration that many great programs to address DMC are still not reaching the people most directly impacted by the disparities in the system. **Mr. Newton** stated that he reviewed the current Arizona Title II funded grantees and was not clear whether any directly addressed disparities.
- **Ms. Gándara** and **Mr. Selover** advised no current Title II awards were made to programs that intentionally addressed this issue, but because the funded programs provide prevention services to reduce justice involvement, they help contribute to reducing the risk of all youth, including youth of color, from entering the system. **Ms. Gándara** and **Mr. Selover** stated the most recent Title II funded program to specifically address the issue was the Pima County Juvenile Court in 2015, which created or eliminated policies and procedures to ensure their practices were fair to all youth and families despite race or ethnicity.
- **Mr. Newton** stated he is learning the significance of the mental health system as it seems to impact every aspect of delinquency and child welfare. He referenced statistics that demonstrate the propensity of incarcerated youth with mental health needs compared to the general population and their exposure to trauma, which can influence behaviors.

- **Mr. Newton** shared an experience of a juvenile who was put in custody, which caused him to lose his Medicaid benefits. All members agreed that this is a major problem that disproportionately affects youth of color and youth from lower-income households.
- **Mr. Newton** summarized that overall it was encouraging and enlightening to see the great work being done, but there is still a long way to go.
- **Ms. Bustillo** recalled Maricopa County was able to work out an agreement with AHCCCS in which benefits would only be suspended while the juvenile was incarcerated. Upon release, benefits would automatically be reinstated. **Ms. Bustillo** was not sure whether this arrangement is still in place.
- **Ms. Ortiz** added while a large proportion of juveniles detained in detention centers have mental health needs, these facilities are not designed to provide adequate mental health treatment.
- **Ms. Gándara** followed up **Mr. Newton's** report stating that the Arizona Juvenile Justice Commission needs to once again prioritize the reduction of racial and ethnic disparities, and advised there are many opportunities to address problems in the system that contribute to disparities, such as access to health care.
- **Ms. Ortiz** agreed that there are numerous approaches and shared that Pinal County was able to reduce many referrals from group homes by training group home staff on handling youth with trauma to address behaviors without police involvement.
- **Mr. Selover** stated that addressing disparities is required by the JJDP Act, and the committee could be involved providing education and awareness to the full commission. **Mr. Selover** agreed that access to Medicaid for incarcerated youth would be a relevant topic for the commission and that workarounds, such as the arrangement initiated by Maricopa County, could be explored.

#### Racial and Ethnic Disparities Committee Plan

- **Mr. Selover** provided members with a worksheet for listing committee goals and action items to be addressed during the current year.
- Committee members referred to the committee's roles and responsibilities document to help identify the goals and subsequent action steps.
- The three goals agreed upon are 1) Inform and educate on racial and ethnic disparities and the work being done to address the issue 2) Provide training and technical assistance to further educate stakeholders 3) Develop and maintain strong partnerships with local entities to stay informed on statewide efforts to reduce disparities.
- Committee members agreed that data collection and reporting, along with community engagement, will be intertwined within each of the three goals.

#### Recruitment of Committee Members

- **Ms. Gándara**, Chair, shifted the conversation to membership recruitment. Committee members reviewed the list of names and systems that were proposed during the previous meeting.
- Committee members concurred with the proposed list of names and proposed additional agencies and names of those who should be invited based on their expertise and representation of various systems.
- **Ms. Gándara** asked **Mr. Selover** to compile the list based on the discussion and send it to the committee members, along with the work plan, to provide an opportunity for final comments.
- **Mr. Selover** stated once additional members have been approved to serve on the committee he will contact them and, if they accept, ask them to attend the next meeting in August.

#### Call to the Public

- **Ms. Gándara**, Chair, made a call to the public. No public was present to answer the call.

#### Adjournment

- **Ms. Gándara** requested a motion to adjourn.
  - **Ms. Bustillo** motioned to adjourn the meeting.
  - **Ms. Ortiz** seconded the motion.
- The motion carried without objection. The meeting was adjourned at 11:03 a.m.